

# **IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH COOPERATIVE LEARNING (THINK PAIR SHARE)**

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## **Abstrak:**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan memahami teks news item para siswa kelas X SMK LKIA Pontianak dengan menggunakan teknik Think Pair Share. Teknik Think Pair Share (TPS) adalah salah satu teknik pembelajaran kooperatif yang dapat mendorong siswa untuk lebih aktif belajar di kelas. Untuk mencapai perkembangan pemahaman membaca para siswa, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas dilaksanakan selama empat kali. Selama penelitian berlangsung, nilai rata – rata kelas pada siklus penelitian pertama adalah 41.25, nilai rata-rata kelas penelitian kedua adalah 45, nilai rata-rata kelas pada penelitian ketiga adalah 63.5, dan nilai rata-rata pada penelitian keempat adalah 68. Keempat nilai penelitian tersebut membuktikan bahwa Think Pair share telah berhasil meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam memahami sebuah teks news item.

**Kata Kunci: Pemahaman, Pembelajaran Kooperatif, Think Pair Share**

## **Abstract:**

This research aimed at improving reading comprehension skill on news item text through of the tenth grade students of SMK LKIA Pontianak in academic year 2012/2013 using Think Pair Share. Think Pair Share (TPS) is one of cooperative teaching strategies which can encourage students to actively engage in the class. In order to achieve the students' improvement, action research was conducted in four cycles. During the action it was found that the students mean score improved from one cycle to another. The mean score of students' reading comprehension in the first cycle was 41.25, the second cycle was 45, the third cycle was 63.5 and the fourth was 68. Those four mean scores had proved that Think Pair Share succeeded to improve the students' reading ability on news text item.

**Keyword: Comprehension, Cooperative Learning, Think Pair Share**

Reading skill is very significant in teaching and learning process because it can give them much information. Nowadays, most of the problems occurring in the classroom is about reading comprehension. It was apparently found by the writer during his teaching class where most of the students had lack ability to comprehend the reading material. This happened in economic vocational school of SMK LKIA Pontianak where the writer taught. Here, the school and the students paid less attention to it. Specifically, the writer discovered that the most difficult text was a news item text. During the writers teaching practice, the students got lower score comparing to the other kinds of text for instance narrative and descriptive text.

As regards to the problem, the writer was interested in improving reading skill in order to comprehend a news text item. The writer believed that cooperative language learning met the goal that the writer intended to. Many researchers believe that cooperative learning

could improve students' work in their academic learning, help them to understand hard concept of learning material, and develop their critical thinking (Trianto, 2009:59). Due to various types of cooperative learning strategies, the writer selected Think Pair Share to be implemented in the classroom because it was simplest technique among all. Hence, the writer conducted an action research focusing on reading ability of news text item using think pair share for the tenth grade students of SMK LKIA Pontianak in Academic Year 2011/2012.

Furthermore, according to Wiryodijoyo (1989) reading is the activity which involves whole individual abilities of the readers that consist of memory, experience, knowledge, brain, language ability, psychologist condition, and emotional. In line with Wiryodijoyo, Harris and Sipay (1980: 8) state that, the readers' emotion, feeling, and intellectual ability, such as thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning, and problem solving, involved in reading activity. Whereas Scott (2001) said that the reader combines their own background knowledge with the information while comprehending the text. It is argued by Jones (2003) states that the keys to comprehension are the activation of prior background knowledge, active engagement in the content, and metacognition. So reading comprehension is a thinking process to evaluate, judge, imagine, reason and solve problem during reading activity with the activation of prior background knowledge, active engagement to the content and metacognition.

There are four level skills of reading comprehension:

a. Literal Reading

The literal level of comprehension is fundamental to all the reading skills at any level because a reader must first understand what the author said before he can draw an inference or make an evaluation. The literal level considered of the easiest level of reading comprehension because a reader is not required to go beyond what the author actually said.

b. Inferential

Inference are ideas which are reader receives when he goes beneath the surface to sense relationships, puts facts and ideas together to draw conclusions and makes generalizations, and detect the mood of the material. Making inferences requires author and more on personal insight.

c. Critical Reading

Critical reading is evaluating written materials, comparing the ideas discovered in the material with standards and drawing conclusions about their accuracy, appropriateness and timeliness. Critical reading depends upon literal comprehension and interpretive comprehension and grasping implied ideas is especially important.

d. Creative Reading

Creative reading involves going beyond the material presented by the author. It requires readers to think as they read, just critical does, and it also requires them to use their imaginations.

The writer only focused on the three skills, they were literal reading, inferential, and critical reading. Those three skills should be applied to comprehend the text.

Texts itself consist of spoken or written words that have the purpose of conveying the message. Text is interpreted by listeners or readers. Communication occurs when the message created by a speaker is successfully interpreted by the listeners or when a writer's words are understood by the readers. The text types represent the most common ways in which language is structured to achieve a particular purpose. Writers and speakers use these structures in order to help the readers or listener understand the text.

According to Anderson (1997) the main literary text types are: narrative, poem and dramas. Those texts types above are used to tell us about human experience, usually in

imaginative way. Their purpose is to make readers and listeners think, laugh, cry or to be entertained. Visual elements (pictures, props, facial expression, etc) can be employed by the narrator to help communicative meaning.

Factual text types present information or ideas. The purpose of these texts is to inform, instruct, educate or persuade the listeners or readers. Anderson (1997) said the main factual text types are: explanation, information report, discussion, exposition, recount, factual description, procedure.

Reading text has some text types, for example analytical exposition, anecdote, descriptive, narrative, procedure, news items, report, recount, and etc. In this research the writer used news item text. News item is a kind of text taught to students in the level of senior high school to meet the objectives of teaching reading. Based on the School Based Curriculum (2006), the standard competence of reading comprehension demands the students to understand the meaning of functional written text and very simple short essay in narrative, descriptive, and news item in the context of daily life to access knowledge. The basic competence (School based curriculum, 2006) also demands the students to be able to respond the meaning and rhetorical steps of simple essays in the form of narrative, descriptive, and news item accurately, fluently, and acceptably related to daily life context to access the knowledge. In addition, news item text has significant material in developing students' knowledge through the information accessed, so that the students could meet the objectives of teaching reading in senior high school.

News item text is a text which informs readers about events of the day. The events are considered important. In line with Sudarwati (2007), she defined news items as a text that purposes to inform readers, listeners, or viewers about events of the day which are considered newsworthy or important.

News item (Sudarwati, 2007) is organized by generic structures, they are:

- a. Newsworthy event in a summary form. This structure tells the event in summary form.
- b. Background of events. In this structure, the text elaborates what happened and explains what caused the incident.
- c. Sources. This structures elaborates comments by participants, witnesses, authorities, and experts involved in the event.

Those generic structures should be comprehended by the students to make them easier to get the point of the text. Besides the generic structure, the language feature also the important thing to be comprehended. The language features of news item text are the use of simple past and past continuous tense.

In order to improve reading comprehension on recount text, the writer employed Think Pair Share as the technique. Think Pair Share or so called TPS is a technique first developed by Professor Frank Lyman at the University of Maryland in 1981 and adopted by many writers in the field of cooperative learning since then. This technique was one of the technique in cooperative learning strategies. The method introduces into the peer interaction element of cooperative learning the idea of 'wait or think' time, which has been demonstrated to be a powerful factor in improving student responses to questions. It is a simple strategy, effective from early childhood through all subsequent phases of education to tertiary and beyond. It is a very versatile technique, which has been adapted and used, in an endless number of ways. "This is one of the foundation stones for the development of the 'co-operative classroom'" (Bell, 1998).

Think-pair-share is a relatively low-risk and short cooperative learning technique, and is ideally suited for instructors and students who are new to cooperative learning (Wisc, 2006). Defined by Ledlow (2001), "Think Pair Share is a low-risk strategy to get many students actively involved in classes of any size".

Ledlow (2001) also declared that Think Pair Share (TPS) technique in education is also about:

1. **Think** about your answer individually.
2. **Pair** with a partner and discuss your answers.
3. **Share** your or your partner's answer, when called upon.

This technique also give advantages to teaching reading. Concluded from (Bell, 1998), the benefits gained from TPS technique are:

- a. It is quick since it does not take much preparation time.
- b. The personal interaction motivates many students with little intrinsic interest in the subject taken.
- c. Multiple kinds and levels of questions can be asked.
- d. It engages the entire class and allows quiet students to answer questions without having to stand out from their classmates.
- e. Teacher can assess student understanding by listening in on several groups during the activity, and by collecting responses at the end.
- f. Teacher can do think-pair-share activities once or several times during a given class period.

#### **A. Method of Research**

In this research, the writer used action research. An action research can be simply defined as a research that finds the answer to solve the problems found. In Action Research, the researcher works in close collaboration with a group of people to improve a situation in a particular setting (Dawson 2002, p. 16). Borg's 1965 study (Ferrance 2000, p. 8) states that "Action research emphasizes the involvement of teachers in problems in their own classrooms and has its primary goal the in-service training and development of the teacher rather than the acquisition of general knowledge in the field of education". Typically, classroom action research is research undertaken in a classroom setting. The classroom setting was Class 1 of tenth grade of SMK LKIA Pontianak, which consists of 40 students as the subject of the research.

For the purpose of obtaining the data, the writer administered a test and applied observation which involved two tools of data collection, they were observation sheet and essay test collaborating eith the teacher. The action conducted in 4 four cycles. In every cycle there were planning, acting, observing, and reflection.

Furthermore, to analyze the data, the writer calculated the mean score of reading comprehension taxt. Individual score was summed and divided by the number of students in the class.

The mean score was classified into the folowing table:

<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Class Performance</b>
80-100	Excellent
60-79	Good
50-59	Average
0-49	Poor

#### **B. Research Finding**

To notice whether the students' reading comprehension is improved when the Think Pair Share technique is held in the classroom, the writer observed the class with the help of observation sheet that shows the activities of students in the class room in four cycles.

The writer started to conduct the research for the first cycle based on the problems that occured in SMA LKIA especially for X students, which were:

1. The students had difficulties in identifying the generic structure of the news item text.
2. The students had difficulties in comprehending the content of the text.
3. The students had lack of motivation to read a news item text.

After getting the treatment in the class, the students' mean score in the first meeting is 41.25. It meant that the writer and the collaborator had to think better preparation for the next cycle since the writer goal was 60 for the mean score. The table of the students' score was presented below:

No.	Students in a Code	Students' Score
1.	A1	75
2.	A2	25
3.	B1	80
4.	B2	35
5.	C1	60
6.	C2	30
7.	D1	55
8.	D2	45
9.	E1	65
10.	E2	25
11.	F1	60
12.	F2	55
13.	G1	40
14.	G2	45
15.	H1	30
16.	H2	40
17.	I1	35
18.	I2	35
19.	J1	40
20.	J2	35
21.	K1	35
22.	K2	20
23.	L1	40
24.	L2	25
25.	M1	25
26.	M2	35
27.	N1	50
28.	N2	30
29.	O1	40
30.	O2	35
31.	P1	45
32.	P2	40
33.	Q1	40
34.	Q2	35
35.	R1	35
36.	R2	35
37.	S1	45
38.	S2	25
39.	T1	55
40.	T2	50

TOTAL	1650
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$$m = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}$$

$$= \frac{1650}{40}$$

$$= 41.25$$

Concerning the first cycle, the problems that should be solved in the second cycle were:

1. Difficulties in identifying the generic sturcture
2. Getting the content of the text. Only five students who pass the minimum score of 60 in the first cycle.
3. Lack of motivation to read.
4. The students were still unfamiliar with the Think Pair Share technique.

The writer did treatment based on the above problems. The writer explained more clearly about the TPS to make them familiar with the teaching an learning. Yet, the result of the second cycle was still not satisfactory because only five students who passed the target of the score which was 60. The mean score was 45.

No.	Students in a code	Students' score
1.	A1	70
2.	A2	30
3.	B1	85
4.	B2	45
5.	C1	65
6.	C2	35
7.	D1	40
8.	D2	50
9.	E1	50
10.	E2	35
11.	F1	60
12.	F2	50
13.	G1	45
14.	G2	45
15.	H1	35
16.	H2	55
17.	I1	45
18.	I2	45
19.	J1	55
20.	J2	50
21.	K1	45
22.	K2	20
23.	L1	50
24.	L2	25
25.	M1	20

26.	M2	40
27.	N1	65
28.	N2	45
29.	O1	50
30.	O2	40
31.	P1	40
32.	P2	40
33.	Q1	40
34.	Q2	35
35.	R1	40
36.	R2	30
37.	S1	55
38.	S2	35
39.	T1	50
40.	T2	45
TOTAL		1800

$$m = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}$$

$$= \frac{1800}{40}$$

$$= 45$$

So, on the third cycle the writer did some improvements. The writer used pictures in the class for the brainstorming and a news about current issue. The news talked about a bomb attack. The writer also changed students' pair for Think Pair Share. As expected, the mean score rose to 63.5.

No.	Students in a code	Students' score
1.	A1	80
2.	A2	60
3.	B1	80
4.	B2	65
5.	C1	75
6.	C2	60
7.	D1	70
8.	D2	65
9.	E1	45
10.	E2	55
11.	F1	75
12.	F2	75
13.	G1	65
14.	G2	60
15.	H1	60
16.	H2	70
17.	I1	65
18.	I2	60
19.	J1	50

20.	J2	70
21.	K1	60
22.	K2	45
23.	L1	60
24.	L2	50
25.	M1	50
26.	M2	65
27.	N1	60
28.	N2	60
29.	O1	65
30.	O2	60
31.	P1	55
32.	P2	55
33.	Q1	65
34.	Q2	60
35.	R1	70
36.	R2	65
37.	S1	80
38.	S2	65
39.	T1	75
40.	T2	70
TOTAL		2540

$$m = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}$$

$$= \frac{2540}{40}$$

$$= 63.5$$

Based on the third cycle, the writer did the fourth cycle because the writer was still not satisfied with the result. The writer chose a news about human trafficking and prepared pictures about the topic to attract the students' attention. The result of the fourth cycle shown a good progress. The mean score was 68. Therefore, the writer felt enough for doing the research. This was the table of each students achievement.

No.	Students in a code	Students'score
1.	A1	75
2.	A2	65
3.	B1	80
4.	B2	70
5.	C1	70
6.	C2	75
7.	D1	80
8.	D2	70
9.	E1	65
10.	E2	65
11.	F1	75



12.	F2	70
13.	G1	70
14.	G2	65
15.	H1	75
16.	H2	80
17.	I1	75
18.	I2	65
19.	J1	65
20.	J2	75
21.	K1	70
22.	K2	65
23.	L1	55
24.	L2	55
25.	M1	55
26.	M2	65
27.	N1	55
28.	N2	60
29.	O1	70
30.	O2	65
31.	P1	65
32.	P2	55
33.	Q1	60
34.	Q2	65
35.	R1	75
36.	R2	60
37.	S1	75
38.	S2	70
39.	T1	75
40.	T2	75
TOTAL		2720

$$m = \frac{\Sigma x}{N}$$

$$= \frac{2720}{40}$$

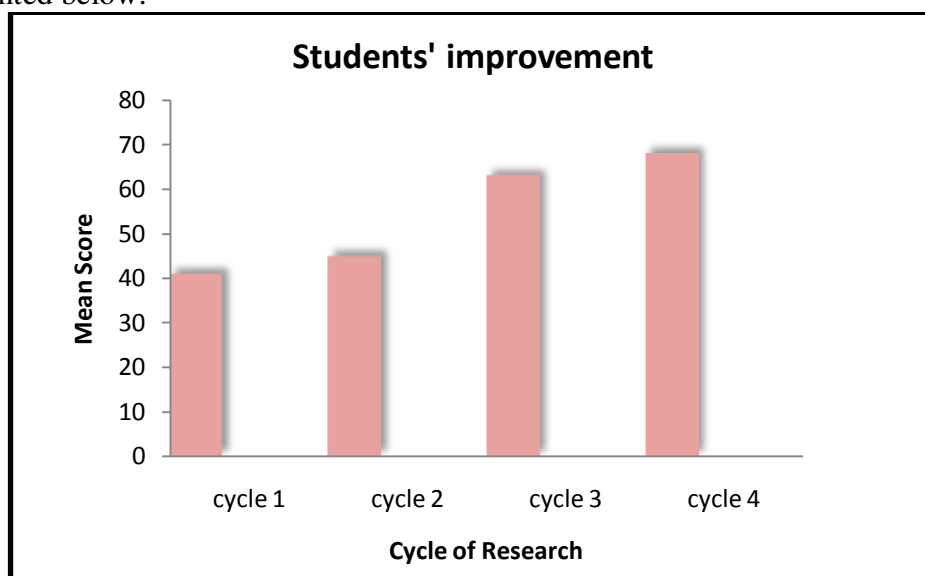
$$= 68$$

From the whole process, the writer found some strength of TPS. It can motivate the students to help each other because they had to work cooperatively and encouraged the students to participate in reading activities. In addition, by doing TPS students also had time to do conversation in English, had more time to share their ideas, could build and maintain their relationship to each other, and students could enhance their skills in explaining and comprehending a text.

Yet, the writer also found some weaknesses. The student who has low vocabulary, knowledge and pronunciation about past material was hard to join this technique. Another weakness was the superiority feeling sometimes appeared in the class sometimes. The

clever one in a pair sometimes led the whole activities. He/ She did not give any chance for his/ her partner.

The writer displayed the improvement during the research in a chart. The chart was presented below.



### C. Conclusion

The reading comprehension of First Year students of SMK LKIA Pontianak class X/I in Academic Year 2012/2013 was significantly increased by using TPS technique. They were able to comprehend the text easier because they found it met their interests. Moreover, TPS also could bring them to the atmosphere where they could express their opinions, ideas, and information to others.

In the first cycle, the result of the students' reading comprehension was still disappointed. In the next three cycle, the progress shown continuously. Especially, a great improvement happened in the last two cycle. It was found that TPS could help students to improve their comprehension in reading news item text. Besides, the students began to involve actively in the reading activities. They also spoke more practical speaking along the use of this technique. In other words, TPS has effectively improved both students' reading comprehension skill as well as their involvement during the reading class activities. Therefore the use of TPS should be recommended especially for teaching reading.

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